

REMARKS

Claims 1-8 were presented for examination and claims 1-8 stand rejected. In the current amendment, claims 1-8 have been amended to address formalities. No new matter has been introduced. Upon entry of the current amendment, claims 1-8 will be presented for examination, of which claims 1 and 5 are independent. Applicants submit that claims 1-8 are in condition for allowance.

The following comments address all stated grounds of rejection. Applicants respectfully traverse all rejections and urge the Examiner to pass the claims to allowance in view of the remarks set forth below.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §112**I. Claims 1-8 Rejected Under 35 U.S.C §112, second paragraph**

Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regards as their invention. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, and submit that claims 1-8, as amended, particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regards as their invention

Claims 1-8 were cited by the Examiner as lacking antecedent basis with regards to the limitation of the second connection or the third connection. Applicants hereby amend claims 1-8 to address these informalities. Applicants submit that claims 1-8, as amended, are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the Examiner's rejection of claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

II. Means/Step Plus Function Language Under 35 U.S.C §112, sixth paragraph

In response to paragraph 5 of the Office Action, Applicants note that there is no requirement to advance an explanation either invoking or not invoking 35 U.S.C. §112, sixth paragraph for the Examiner's interpretation of the claims.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102**III. Claims 1 and 5 Rejected Under 35 U.S.C. §102**

Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Publication No. 2002/0042839 to Peiffer et al., which wholly incorporates by reference US application no. 60/239552 to Peiffer et al. ("Pieffer") having an effective filing date of October 10, 2000.

Claims 1 and 5 are amended independent claims. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Applicants submit herewith an executed Declaration under 37 C.F.R. §1.131 establishing invention of the claimed subject matter by the Applicants prior to the effective date of the Peiffer reference. Based on the fact's recited in the declaration, Peiffer is not a proper prior art reference. Accordingly, Applicants request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claims 1 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by Peiffer.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103**IV. Claims Rejected Under 35 U.S.C. §103**

Claims 2 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over Peiffer in view of what the Examiner states is well known in the art. Claims 3-4 and 7-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over Peiffer in view of RFC 2616, Fielding et al. ("Fielding"). Claims 2-4 depend on and incorporate the patentable subject matter of independent claim 1.

Claims 6-8 depend on and incorporate the patentable subject matter of independent claim 5.

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Based on the fact's recited in the Declaration submitted herewith under 37 C.F.R. §1.131, Peiffer is not a proper prior art reference. Applicants submit therefore, that independent claims 1 and 5 are patentable and in condition for allowance. Because Fielding does not teach or suggest each and every feature of the claimed invention, Fielding does not detract from the patentability of independent claims 1 and 5. Claims 2-4 depend on and incorporate all the patentable subject matter of claim 1, and claims 6-8 depend on and incorporate all the patentable subject matter of claim 5. Therefore, claims 2-4 and 6-8 are also patentable and in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 2-4 and 6-8 under 35 U.S.C. §103.

CONCLUSION

In light of the aforementioned arguments, Applicants contend that each of the Examiner's rejections has been adequately addressed and all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration, withdrawal of all grounds of rejection, and allowance of all of the pending claims.

Should the Examiner feel that a telephone conference with Applicants' attorney would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is urged to contact the Applicants' attorney at the telephone number identified below.

Respectfully submitted,

CHOATE, HALL & STEWART, LLP

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/s/ Christopher J. McKenna
Christopher J. McKenna
Registration No. 53,302
Attorney for Applicants

Choate, Hall & Stewart, LLP
Two International Place
Boston, MA 02110
(617) 248-5000